# The Key Ingredients In the Rainbow Plate Approach

## EXPOSE AND EXPLORE, DON'T PREACH

• Repeated exposure and sensory exploration are powerful and effective strategies for engaging children and changing their behaviour around food.



- Children eat what they like and they like what they know! Getting children up close and hands-on with food sparks their interest and enthusiasm and inspires the development of lasting connections.
- Pressuring children to eat is a strategy that usually backfires. If adults keep food experiences positive and avoid pressure, children are more likely to explore and taste food on their own.



#### RELAX AND CHILDREN WILL TOO

- Adults have such an important influence on a child's eating behaviour. A relaxed and positive environment is one in which a child's healthy relationship with food and healthy eating habits will flourish.
- If adults relax around food and mealtimes, children will too!



#### STEP AWAY FROM THE MICROSCOPE

• We eat food, not nutrients, so the best approach to food education is one that focuses on the actual foods we eat, rather than the nutrients they contain.



## FOOD CONNECTS EVERYTHING

- What and how we eat is influenced by every element of the world we live in.
- Impactful food education considers family context and traditions, access, availability, personal taste and texture preferences, allergies, culture, and personal life experiences.
- Increasing awareness and consumption of locally produced food is a strategy that benefits individuals, the local economy, and the global environment.



## MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT

- Eating looks different for everyone. Food education should be inclusive, adaptable and accessible, respecting all the factors that influence any individual's experience.
- This approach can be adapted to any setting, context, community, culture, and budget.



## MARVEL AT THE MAGIC OF FOOD

- Instead of teaching about nutrients, the Rainbow Plate approach engages people of all ages by shining a spotlight on the beauty and sensory wonders within food.
- We shift the focus away from "it's good for you" to "wow that's delicious!"



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